CMS' RDS Program E-Newsletter

Useful Links:

RDS Center
Home page for the CMS RDS Center
http://rds.cms.hhs.gov

CMS Coordination of Benefits/VDSA Web Site
Home page for information on submitting retiree files through the Voluntary Data Sharing Agreement
http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicare/cob/default.asp

CMS Employer Page
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Web Site specifically for employers
http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicare/cob/default.asp

Contact Us:

http://rds.cms.hhs.gov

RDS@cms.hhs.gov

(877) RDS-HELP or

(877) 737-4357

(877) RDS-TTY0 or

(877) 737-8890

How to Communicate Retiree Information Using the Mainframe

The RDS Center would like to direct your attention to the new How to Communicate Retiree Information Using the Mainframe document. This document is divided into three sections:

Retiree File Submission (to the RDS Center)

This section addresses the questions and processes around Retiree File Submission such as setting up mainframe-to-mainframe connectivity, defining retiree file layout, sending retiree files, and more.

Retiree Response File (from the RDS Center)

This section addresses the questions and processes around Retiree Response Files such as how to process your retiree response file, what various reason codes mean, what you should do if a retiree is rejected, and more.

Weekly Notification File (from the RDS Center)

This section addresses the questions and processes around Weekly Notification Files such as how to process your Weekly Notification File, what various reason codes mean, what if there are no Weekly Notification Files, and more.

How To Change Payment Setup

The RDS Center would like to direct your attention to the new How to Change Payment Setup document. This document explains what Payment Setup steps can be changed, how to make those changes, how to resubmit Payment Setup, and more.

Authorized Representative Verification Status

The RDS Center is pleased to announce that effective May 6, 2006, Plan Sponsors are able to view the status of their Authorized Representative Verification form online using the RDS Secure Web. Since Retiree Drug Subsidy payments are made with Medicare trust fund dollars, the

verification of the Authorized Representative for each Plan Sponsor Identification Number ensures that the RDS Center makes accurate subsidy payments to legitimate Sponsors and protects tax payer monies as required by law.

Plan Sponsors must be aware that **no** payment requests for the Retiree Drug Subsidy may be made until the Authorized Representative is verified by the RDS Center. The Authorized Representative Verification status on the RDS Secure Web Site must be "Approved" before a payment request may be made to the RDS Center. The RDS Center urges all Plan Sponsors to submit the information on their Authorized Representative as early as possible in the application process to ensure that this important step is completed in a timely manner. For additional information and access to the Authorized Representative Verification form go to: Authorized Representative Verification Form Announcement/Instructions. Please note that the provided verification form must be submitted as is (i.e., not modified).

As part of ongoing efforts to enhance the user-friendliness of the RDS application process, the Authorized Representative Verification status and approval date is displayed in the RDS Secure Web Site on the "Application List" page. This information will be displayed in the "Details Box," which is located directly under the Plan Sponsor ID number.

Additionally, you can use the RDS Secure Web Site online help feature to find out more information about the Authorized Representative verification process and status.

Please keep in mind if your Authorized Representative changes, a new Authorized Representative Verification form must be resubmitted for the new Authorized Representative.

RDS National Conference Call

Voiceover has been added to the February 22, 2006 National Conference Call presentation and is now available for download. The presentation can be downloaded and printed; however, the voiceover is strictly an audio file and has not been transcribed. If the voiceover does not start as soon as the presentation displays, click the speaker icon in the lower right-hand corner of each slide.

Note: Due to the size of the presentation and/or the speed of your connection, it may take up to 5 minutes to download.

Important RDS Message on Retiree Denial Determinations

If the RDS Center returns a response file and you do not agree with the determination(s) for a retiree(s), or you find that the determination is inconsistent with what you have been told by the affected retiree, please do the following:

- Verify that the retiree's information was entered correctly. Correctly providing the required information (Name, SSN, Date of Birth, and Gender) is critical in the retiree validation process.
- If incorrect information was submitted for a retiree, change the information accordingly and submit the retiree record as an Add/Update/Delete record in your next retiree file, depending on the change. If a change is made to required information, the record should be an Add. If a change is made to coverage effective dates and the retiree is still covered within your plan, the record should be an Update, otherwise, if the retiree is not covered within your plan, the record should be a Delete.
- In a small number of cases, a sponsor may encounter a retiree who is rejected due to enrollment in a Medicare Part D drug plan despite the retiree's belief he or she is not enrolled in Medicare Part D. In these cases, you should also resubmit the retiree's information to the RDS Center via an add/update/delete file. We coordinate information with Medicare databases on a daily basis to determine a retiree's subsidy eligibility. Recent Medicare database changes have updated and reset enrollment status for some retirees that may be in this situation. If the issue is still not resolved following the resubmission, retirees can call 1-800-Medicare for assistance in clarifying their status. Regional CMS office case work staff is also available to help retirees and sponsors clarify an individual's Medicare Part D enrollment and ensure, for example, that a retiree's prior decision to opt out of Medicare Part D coverage has been properly implemented.

In all such cases, CMS urges sponsors to remain flexible while a person's Medicare Part D status is clarified and updated, particularly if your plan does not provide retiree medical coverage to retirees who enroll in Medicare Part D. This will ensure that retirees and their families are not subjected to potential loss of health coverage through no fault of their own.

How To Change Application AFTER Submission

The RDS Center would like to direct your attention to the new How to Change Application Information AFTER Submission document. This document explains what application information may be changed and

how to change it on applications with any of the following statuses: Submitted, Approved, Application Error, Re-sign, or EFT Re-sign Application.

Helpful Tips

This section is intended to provide you with helpful tips about relevant RDS topics. The focus of this month's "Helpful Tips" section answers the common Payment Setup misunderstandings/questions and provides helpful resources.

- **Do I have to complete the six Payment Setup steps in chronological order?**

  The RDS Secure Web Site does not require you to complete the six Payment Setup steps in chronological order; however, the RDS Center **highly recommends** that you do so, to reduce confusion and/or error(s). This is especially important when completing step 5: Assigning Benefit Options to Cost Reporters.

- **What's the difference between a Vendor Designee and a Plan Sponsor Designee?**

  A Vendor Designee is an employee of the Vendor. Vendors must register with the RDS Center and will be assigned a Vendor ID. Vendor Designees may only be assigned the Report Cost payment privilege. Only Designees that have been assigned the Cost Reporting payment privilege, who have not already been assigned as the Plan Sponsor's Cost Reporter Designee, may be assigned as a Vendor Designee. In addition, Vendors are associated with Benefit Options, so all Vendor Designee(s), by default, are associated to the same Benefit Option as the Vendor. To assign a Vendor Designee access step 4: Specify Vendors for Cost Reporting and select the "Maintain Cost Reporter" action on the "Vendor Summary" screen. If a previously added Vendor Designee is no longer required, you must remove the Designee's Cost Reporter assignment. To remove the payment privilege, access step 4: Specify Vendors for Cost Reporting and select the "Maintain Cost Reporter" screen.

  A Plan Sponsor Designee is a person that is typically employed by the Plan Sponsor and has been assigned the Designee role and either the Cost Reporter or Payment Requestor payment privilege.

- **Am I required to have a Vendor Designee if I have Vendor(s) reporting costs?**

  Vendors are required to have at least one Designee when the source of cost reporting is via data entry. Vendors may also opt

to have a Designee if they are reporting costs via mainframe and they want to view their mainframe submissions within the secure website.

- **Am I required to have a Plan Sponsor Designee?**

  No. The Account Manager may be designated as the Cost Reporter for all benefit options and/or a Vendor may be assigned to report costs for some or all benefit options. Alternatively, a Plan Sponsor Designee may be named as the Cost Reporter for any or all benefit options.

- **Who needs a Vendor ID?**

  Any Vendor wanting to send cost data (either via mainframe or data entry in the RDS Secure Web Site) to the RDS Center for a Plan Sponsor must register with the RDS Center to be assigned a Vendor ID. In fact, **all entities** sending cost data via the mainframe must be assigned a Vendor ID from the RDS Center. Also, if a Vendor plans on submitting cost data both mainframe and data entry, they will need a Vendor ID for each cost reporting method.

- **Why is a Vendor ID necessary?**

  Vendor IDs are necessary to ensure the privacy of the cost data displayed in the RDS Secure Web Site. With the use of Vendor IDs, we are able to display the cost data to only those users associated with that specific Vendor's data.

- **What if I already have a Vendor ID for retiree file reporting?**

  If a Vendor currently has a Vendor ID related to the RDS retiree file processing, the plan is to let them use their current Vendor ID; however, they still need to call the RDS Center for confirmation. If a Vendor plans on submitting cost data both mainframe and data entry, they will need a Vendor ID for each cost reporting method.

- **Helpful Resources**
  For more information about Payment Setup, go to the following documents: How to Complete Payment Setup and/or How to Change Payment Setup.

  In addition, the RDS Secure Web Site has a "Quick Help" section, located on the right-hand side of the screen, with two links. "Help about this page" contains screen specific help and

"Advanced Help" opens the entire RDS online help system.